



RIVER BIRCH (*Betula nigra*)

River birch can grow 50 to 90 feet tall but is often seen 40 to 50 feet. It normally grows with a central leader and small-diameter, dark-colored lateral branches. It has a narrow, oval to pyramidal crown when young, spreading wider with age as several branches become dominant. It lacks the white trunk bark associated with other birches but is distinguished by reddish, brown bark peeling off in film-like papery curls providing interest all year round. Branches droop particularly when they are wet, so regular pruning in the early years will be required to remove lower branches when they are located close to areas where clearance is needed for vehicular traffic.